

I claim:

1. An article having on at least a portion of its surface a protective and decorative coating having the appearance of stainless steel comprising:

a layer comprised of polymer;

a stack layer comprised of layers comprised of refractory metal or refractory metal alloy alternating with layers comprised of reaction products of refractory metal or refractory metal alloy, nitrogen and oxygen;

vapor deposited at relatively low pressures of below about 8 millitorr a color layer comprised of reaction products of refractory metal or refractory metal alloy, nitrogen and oxygen wherein the total nitrogen and oxygen content of said reaction products of refractory metal or refractory metal alloy, nitrogen and oxygen is from about 4 to about 32 atomic percent with the nitrogen content being at least about 3 atomic percent.

2. The article of claim 1 wherein said total nitrogen and oxygen content is from about 5 to about 28 atomic percent with the nitrogen content being at least about 4 atomic percent.

3. The article of claim 1 wherein a layer comprised of refractory metal oxide or refractory metal alloy oxide is on said color layer.

4. The article of claim 1 wherein a refractory metal or refractory metal alloy strike layer is on said polymer layer.

5. The article of claim 1 wherein a chromium layer is on said polymer layer.

6. The article of claim 5 wherein a refractory metal or refractory metal alloy strike layer is on said chromium layer.

7. The article of claim 1 wherein said refractory metal is selected from the group consisting of hafnium, zirconium and titanium.

8. The article of claim 1 wherein said refractory metal alloy is zirconium-titanium alloy.

9. The article of claim 3 wherein said refractory metal is selected from the group consisting of hafnium, zirconium and titanium.

10. The article of claim 6 wherein said refractory metal is selected from the group consisting of hafnium, zirconium and titanium.

11. The article of claim 6 wherein said refractory metal alloy is zirconium-titanium alloy.

12. The article of claim 1 wherein said relatively low pressures are below about 5 millitorr.

13. The article of claim 12 wherein said relatively low pressures are below about 3 millitorr.